DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 348 898 HE 024 625

AUTHOR Storey, Eileen
TITLE Academic Credit at Marymount Manhattan College for Student Volunteers.
INSTITUTION Marymount Manhattan Coll., New York, N.Y.
SPONS AGENCY Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (ED), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE Sep 89
CONTRACT P116F80103-88A
NOTE 21p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Church Related Colleges; *College Credits; College Students; Community Organizations; *Community Services; Experiential Learning; Higher Education; *High School Equivalency Programs; *Homeless People; Program Development; School Community Relationship; Student Attitudes; *Student Participation; Tutorial Programs; *Volunteers
IDENTIFIERS *Marymount Manhattan College NY

ABSTRACT

The report describes a 2-year project at Marymount Manhattan College (New York) to develop and implement a community service program which provides student participants with tuition credits. Students served in either a shelter for homeless women or with a tutorial program for adults preparing for the high-school equivalency examination. The report relies on quotes from student logs to demonstrate the program's effectiveness in enriching the lives of both students and community recipients of student services. Suggestions for similar programs include ensuring appropriate supervision and making the internship course more accessible to all students. (DB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ACADEMIC CREDIT AT MARYMOUNT MANHATTAN COLLEGE FOR STUDENT VOLUNTEERS

Summary for FIPSE and ERIC

ED348898

Working with, through, and for...

Students at Marymount Manhattan College chose to work with disadvantaged populations of New York City: homeless middle-aged women and high school dropouts. Through their participation in an already existing G.E.D. program in East Harlem and a well established food and shelter program in the Times Square area, these students worked through many of their social, economic and geographic fears - fears of the unknown. Guided by college mentors and site supervisors who required of them logs and term papers as well as faithful service, they worked for three academic credits in an appropriate discipline - sociology, psychology, or education.

Project Reports: Executive and Final

Dreams: A Writing Workshop in East Harlem

Let Love Be Free: A Booklet for Volunteers

Submitted by Director, Eileen Storey
Marymount Manhattan College
221 East 71 Street
New York, New York 10021

HE 024 625

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Grantee Organization

Marymount Manhattan College
Campus Ministry Office
221 East 71 Street
New York, New York 10011

Grant Number

P116F80103 - 88A

Project Dates

Starting Date: October 1, 1987
Ending Date: September 30, 1989

Project Director

Eileen Storey
Chaplain
Marymount Manhattan College
221 East 71 Street
New York, New York 10021
Telephone: (212) 517-0400

FIPSE Project Director

John Donohue

Grant Award

Year 1 - $21,000
Year 2 - $10,000 + $600 supplemental
Total - $32,100

Project Title: Academic Credit at Marymount Manhattan College for Student Volunteers

Grantee Organization and Address: Marymount Manhattan College
221 East 71 Street
New York, New York 10011

Name ane Phone of Project Director: Eileen Storey, s.c.
212-517-0632

A. Project Overview

In the proposal abstract submitted to FIPSE, Judith Wilmot wrote: "Marymount Manhattan College, responding to its students who wish to perform community service work, requests a grant to help support a program where students who participate in a structured and supervised program of volunteer work would receive tuitional credits." Our proposal called for FIPSE's support largely in terms of supervision compensation and the College's support in terms of tuition credits. We chose two sites for student internships: The Dwelling Place, a shelter in the Times Square area for homeless women, and a tutorial G.E.D. program for adults in East Harlem.

B. Purpose

The purpose of Marymount Manhattan College was to provide students the opportunity to share their gifts with the city's less fortunate people. This was - and is - our immediate purpose. The more distant goal is to provide this city with social workers, socially concerned lawyers, dedicated teachers - those whose professions would be determined by their experiences in these internships.

C. Background and Origins

In her proposal abstract, written to obtain this funding, Judith Wilmot wrote: "Marymount Manhattan College has a long standing tradition of students involved in community service work. In earlier years, the stress on social responsibility was underlined by the requirement that every student participate for one hour a week in a social service program. No academic credit was awarded for such activities...social service was an integral part of an education that was intent on an education of the whole person, and was valuable experiential learning." This background, it seems to me, must now become foreground as we become more and more aware of the inequities of our social and educational systems.

FIPSE asks about the origins of our outreach educational programs. The real origin, I think, is the human heart. This remains steady even when the social and financial circumstances of our student body has changed drastically. Now our students come, themselves, from lower income families. Over 85% work to support themselves while they attend college, over 70% receive some kind of financial aid, close to half are minority students, and the majority are first generation college women and men. Our request for a FIPSE grant was meant to enable students in these circumstances to

enter into the tradition of service that has always characterized the college, a tradition they could relate to empathetically but not financially.Our students are themselves out earning the money to pay for their sociology and aducation courses. Our background as a concerned institution and our present circumstances of students willing but unable to give time freely add up to the origins of our request for funding.

D. Project Description

One of our projects is in cooperation with the Dwelling Place, a shelter for homeless women in New York City. There are few resources for middle-aged homeless women in the city, and their growing numbers have impacted on all New Yorkers. Addressing this need became a high priority among some of the Marymount Manhattan students. In the body of the report, I will share project descriptions from the students' logs. For their work, students received, upon completion of the academic requirements attached to their work with the women of The Dwelling Place, three credits either in sociology or in psychology.

The second community service project was a tutorial G.E.D. program for adults preparing for the high school equivalency examinations. Marymount Manhattan students worked with women and men in East Harlem in a tutorial one-on-one learning Situation for the first hour of any given day. Sister Dolorita, their supervisor, insisted upon this, because the women and men the students were helping, perhaps particularly the women, had no time and no space that thay could call their own in their living situations. This was their time for their needs. They would simply call our college students over as they needed help with a word or a problem. But in the second hour our students took the leadership. What a life-giving experience this was for them, and what a break-through experience for the people of East Harlem with whom they were working! Description again is best left to those involved; it is a description you will find in the booklet Dreams. Once again, our students received from their composite of volunteer and academic work, three credits.

E. Project Results

Marymount Manhattan volunteers were quick to realize the basic truth that the serving and the served are involved in a dynamic that is mutually instructive, mutually enriching. At least two students who have done an internship at The Dwelling Place will continue in masters' programs their preparation to serve the homeless: one is now working for a law degree with public service in focus; the other has started an MSW, something not even remotely in her consciousness when she began this volunteer program at the Dwelling Place. One student who worked in the G.E.D. program in East Harlem is trying for a job on public television's literacy program. These results concern the future of our students at Marymount Manhattan College. We know that, whatever their career choices, this internship has meant much for their growth in awareness, in sympathy, in social strategizing. All have been profoundly impressed by the dedication of the women - mostly religious sisters - who guided their work at these sites. Students have seen their own ideals focused and realized in everyday practice.

What are the results for the people served by the students? Who can say how far an affirmation will go? Who can say how far a helping hand will reach? The fact that the number of G.E.D. aspirants has doubled since our students began going into East Harlem says something about human response to a human intervention. The fact that students, running for a train in Grand Central terminal, have to debate the wisdom of calling a woman by name

- a woman who still spends her night in the terminal but who shows up at The Dwelling Place for a shower or a meal - says something about human contacts. For myself, I can only rejoice that FIPSE supported us in all this. I believe in the separation of church and state. I believe in private colleges. But I also believe in the government's responsibility to care for citizens who are down and even out. This is surely where we must work together : we at Marymount Manhattan College to develop a stronger bias for the poor, and the U.S. Department of Education to support this improvement in post secondary education.

F. Summary Conclusion

Every college student involved in this kind of experiential program is changed. Academic horizons are enlarged as education becomes more holistic, more socially oriented. This emphasis upon experiential growth and social consciousness will pay large dividends in the future of our nation. Whatever we do to keep stretching the minds and hearts of our students, whatever we do to open them up to the world around them, to heighten their awareness of political-social realities that cry out for change, is well done. FIPSE helped us address two of our city's outstanding needs. Our students, and those who experienced their gifts of mind and heart, will remember the positive energy that was brought into play in often painful circumstances.

G. Appendices

It is with pleasure that I forward to you Dreams, the account of a writing workshop engaged in by our students at Marymount Manhattan College and the East Harlem participants in a G.E.D. program. Both workshop and its description in Dreams were made possible by the FIPSE grant given to us.

I also enclose our present brochure, a work meant to attract as many volunteers as possible for the city involvements mentioned on its middle pages: outreach that cannot fail to enrich those who learn how to give and those who can bring themselves to receive.

My hope is that we will again be in touch with FIPSE as we develop innovative programs for the city's perennial needs.

Appendices were not included in the copy received by ERIC.

FINAL REPORT

Project Overview

For the past several years, and up to the time of our grant award, volunteer work on the part of students at this college was private and unnoticed - a change from the time when it had been required of everyone even in order to graduate. In applying for the FIPSE grant, we wanted once again to make public the importance of giving quality time to disadvantaged people in our heavily populated city. We chose two sites that we knew were responding to the city's particularly acute needs of education and housing.

We chose East Harlem because we knew there was both a literacy problem and a desire for ongoing education. Marymount Manhattan students have made a serious effort to be of service in an already existing G.E.D. program run by the Little Sisters as part of their over all Family Health Services. I knew that we were entrusting our students to a skillful teacher and a very capable administrator. On my end, that was an important consideration - I wanted college students to see dedication in skillful action. Our students learned to pace their presentations and to deal realistically with the varying levels of literacy. That the project was well chosen is almost palpably evident in the descriptive account prepared by one of the participating students. That account is a partial project overview and is enclosed with this final report.

Our second concentration was The Dwelling Place, a service project that reaches out to the almost forgotten women of the street between thirty and sixty years of age. Once again, I knew the supervision would be characterized by profound empathy for the people involved. By its very nature, this project was not as upbeat as the literacy and high school equivalency project. Often, students arrived at the site with an anxiety headache. They began their four hours service time by serving the main meal of the day. This was easy because their duties were so clear. Their skills of communication or of supportive presence were tested in the hours that followed. That the project was well chosen is evidenced by the fact that some of the student volunteers have changed their career goals - chooing to go on for an M.S.W. in place of an M.B.A., choosing social advocacy rather than corporate law.

FINAL REPORT

Purpose

It did not take much looking around to decide upon the needs we would address. Illiteracy and homelessness are like open wounds in the city.

The problems our students at the East Harlem site addressed were illiteracy, lack of self-esteem, single-parenting with no job income, a never-too-far-away temptation to succumb to a sense of hopelessness. Helped by the site supervisor, MMC students learned to put their own plans for a successful G.E.D. program into the larger perspective of the lives of these neighborhood people whose need for private space, private progress, freedom from the harrassing cares of difficult living situations...must be honored. It was only after an hour of such private work during which any of the women or men could call for private help that the group work began. Our students' purpose is well illustrated by this page of a log:

> In the second phase Stephanie read poetry and concentrated on the power of language. After reading a sonnet of Shakespeare, a short discussion was lead by a student who questioned his choice of words. Were his words abstract or appropriate? It was determined that the words were just on a higher level than we are accustomed to, but not one that is too high for the common person to achieve. I wrote down ten words that seemed difficult and read them to the class. Using the dictionary and our own understanding of words, we defined each word. Some students even took notes!
>
> The most exciting and rewarding part of the morning was when Stephanie read Langston Hughes' poem "Harlem." I wrote the words on the blackboard, after which we analyzed each word and line together as a class. The students responded with deep emotion and insight. They each knew what it meant to have a dream.
>
> The third phase of the morning was the writing workshop. We passed out a basket of pictures and asked the students to write some words, a sentence, or a short story based on their response to the picture. Quite a few students asked if they could write about their own dreams instead. Could they! Stephanie, Lesley and I smiled broadly and tried to contain our excitement. The last forty minutes or so were spent working individually with the students on their compositions
>
> I had been afraid that our purpose would be misunderstood, that our plans would meet with indifference or even dislike. Instead, a spirit of excitement and electricity circulated through the room - a thrill that went right through my body. Instead of having trouble finding

> one or two words to write, these students had trouble keeping their composition down to one page. Their intelligence had been starved of opportunities to express itself and their emoti;ns had been bottled up for too long. I was overwhelmed by their deep passions and fine articulation of feelings. We Marymounters laughed; instead of toning the lectures down, we would have to increase our research and resources to keep up with the students. Our work is cut out for us!

Our purpose in both sites is to be educated by the way specific needs are already being addressed and to test out, under direction, our own responses to the problems perceived. Certainly the purpose of involving our college students in the work of The Dwelling Place is not different from the way it was described by a student who made this entry into her log:

> College has taught me a lot
> And now in my last semester
> I get ready to leave.
> I have finished learning all I can here
> I will leave behind the classrooms
> the professors
> the lounge
> the studying
> the cafeteria
> the courses
> and everything else but...
> the learning process
> and The Dwelling Place
> Because here I have not learned
> All I can learn.

The Dwelling Place is a difficult school. Here young and not so young college students meet women whose lives have bottomed out. It is easy to serve them dinner, not so easy to engage them in conversation. Our purpose is neither: it is to encourage life-giving exchange; it is to bring new and positive energy into a hurting population of middle-aged homeless women.

The approach we took at both sites was quite straight forward. In both cases, we took advantage of the excellent supervision - a supervision that also allowed students to test out their own skills and insights. My understanding of the problems we have addressed has not changed. But what has changed is my understanding of my own role in this educational venture. My own self-sufficiency is a pitfall. I would urge other project directors to be in constant touch with faculty and administration if for no other reason than to attract, through them, more volunteers. My contacts, my bulletin board notices are not nearly so effective as a full faculty awareness of what is going on.

We have indeed involved our volunteers in classroom presentations of their work. They have gone to education and sociology classes to recruit more volunteers. But we have not made an all out effort at communication. The problems of illiteracy and homelessness do not, unfortunately, need redefining, but our sense of involvment needs both sensitive redefining and more enlightened strategizing.

Part of this strategizing can be as simple as numbering the course in such a way that it is accessible to all. Thus, an Educ. 297 suggests even to freshmen that they could be approved for the internship. A 400 immediately sends the signal that underclassmen need not apply. This kind of thinking needs to be done before a semester's course offerings go to the printer! The immediacy of the educational and sociological problems and realities needs to work in tandem with the academic reality.

When a student has been moved by the experience of an internship, she wonders if there is some way that she can "keep on keeping on." It is important to know from administration what is possible in the way of six internship credits. When such a choice is not academically possible, what is the best way to respond to and to affirm a student's willingness to continue at a site that has become life-giving to her? This is usually more than a question of credits: it is often a question of career. It is incumbent upon the director to find out the purpose of every request for an internship!

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

FINAL REPORT

Project Description

At the two sites chosen, our project was a hands-on experience with an academic back-up. We did not want to inundate the volunteers with academic considerations. But we did want them to situate their experience within a recognized discipline of social service and social education. Early on in the internship, each student met with a professor in the field of internship chosen and determined upon a term paper consonant with the hands-on experience. In some cases, this paper was a social analysis; in others, it was an evaluation of suggested methodologies. Always, the academic work moved in tandem with the experiential involvement.

The "scale and intensity" of my own involvement leaves much room for improvement, but student logs witness to an intense involvement in an internship that enabled the students to work in what might well become their professional commitment to society.

Because I think the project is best described by those who were in the forefront, I would like at this point to share some log entries that relate to the daily experience of some of the students. Thus, from Diane, this entry:

> I had a very productive day today. Half my time was spent working out a speech with Joya. She had procured a part-time volunteer job and has been called to write an essay about what it means to be a teenage mother and then to present it in a speech. Her thoughts are clear and touching, though her vocabulary is limited...
>
> The second half of the morning was spent with Sheila. She is a woman in her early thirties who has attempted to improve her education more than once and either failed or just quit. Yet, she continues as well as discontinues...
>
> I also handed out the newspapers I had ordered. We're researching libraries in the neighborhood to take the students on a field trip. It seems to me there is no end to the possibilities.

Another log entry from Diane reads as follows:

> Our program's goals are these:
> a. bring the students to the public library t-3 times and insure that each participant has a library card;

b. improve the students' writing skills so that they can write a paragraph on their own;

c. excite and encourage the students and help prove to them that the G.E.D. can be studied for and passed;

d. show the students that learning is not only necessary, but enjoyable.

> This program is the most exciting thing I've done in a long while.

Our volunteers in the South Bronx G.E.D. program knew that some of the more advanced people they were working with needed history and science books written at an appropriate level. That explains the following entry of another Marymount Manhattan student:

> A raffle for theatre tickets is always successful, and Diane can get the tickets. We decided that some of the money collected in our raffle could be spent on pre-GED workbooks available at Barnes and Nobles - workbooks that would serve as a bridge between the elementary levels in language and the level in history and science at which the students are expected to perform for the GED. We will also get some history books for their library shelf.

The following log entry is particularly moving, because it comes from a student who had herself gone the route of the G.E.D.:

> You can feel the warmth that the sisters here generate for everyone. It feels like a place people can come to when they feel lost and need help just to keep on going.

On our end, we encouraged the Marymount Manhattan students to be both prepared and flexible. The lesson one is prepared to give is not always the lesson that one will actually give. What matters is what helps most those who come on a given day. Sometimes those who ask for clarification or supplementary subject matter do not show up for the following lesson or, indeed, for a couple of weeks. Our students had to learn to cope with their own frustrations, had to learn how to appreciate the chaotic situations and emotional vulnerability that make attendance sometimes sporadic and always marvelous.

Project Description (con'd)

At the Dwelling Place, the project description is, at least on the surface of things, fairly uncomplicated. The supervisor there had asked that our students come one day a week from five in the afternoon until nine-thirty in the evening. In that way, a student would have an opportunity to relate to the women in more ways that by simply serving them at dinner time. As Sister Nancy said, "Your internship is not in waitressing; it's in meeting our ladies."

We expected our students to grow in knowledge of the services offered by state and city, to help the ladies with questions of food stamps, S.S.I., Medicaid, social services available to them. In actuality, the project seldom involved our students in specific sociological information. It involved them, rather, in listening to personal stories and shattered dreams, to unreal hopes and disconnecting silences.

Once again, this is best described by a student involved in the work:

> While the Center's primary objectives are to connect women with legal support systems, to help them find permanent housing, to house temporarily those with the most potential for being admitted to permanent housing but who need to be prepared for this step, to feed a large group breakfast and dinner each day, I can see they also create a temporary home on a daily basis...
>
> Rules play an important part in the successful functioning of the program, for without strict enforcement of key rules, there would be instant chaos. However, there are many lesser rules which can be used effectively either from an enforcement perspective or as rules to be broken. They basically protect against unfairness about which the women are very sensitive. Also, they allow for mistakes and a consideration of real, special situations which, when acknowledged, are in a sense a recognition and acceptance of each individual's uniqueness in a group structure and can therefore foster mutual respect.

> When I first entered this program in February, I was struck by the solitude and isolation of many women after dinner. A few sat at the front tables and watched television, most found a way to sleep. It was depressing when we had to awaken them at 9 p.m. for their snack, only to watch them eat and go back to sleep without any acknowledgement. We left a dark and relatively silent room and went home.
>
> During a slow, three-month process, the environment has changed radically to one where groups begin to form after dinner to either watch television or visit. At snack time, there are only a few sleeping guests and, when we leave, most are lively and animated in saying goodnight. I attribute this to our interaction with the women both during and after dinner and the positive energy this has created in the room. We provide a positive energy, provide a continuity, communicate a genuine interest, actively participate to fulfill their needs by giving them haircuts, dispensing towels, shampoo, etc., for showers, help support their interests, participate in games with them, and respect their individuality.

One student describes her own beginning at this project and, in so doing, goes below the surface of things:

> This is the first time I've been in a situation like this, and I was nervous before arriving. I did not know how the ladies would react to me, nor how I should or would react to them. I took some deep breaths and repeated the affirmation, "I am not going to judge or to be judged, only to serve and learn." I think I was afraid of feeling guilty about being with a group of people who have so little while I have so much. I also think that a substantial part of my uneasiness was simply fear of the unknown.
>
> I became aware, in the four hours I was there, that all of the women, as different as they might look, all seemed to have a similar frame of reference, a sense of reality that is different from the society at large...a reality where one simply has to do without. The range of things one "needs" becomes much smaller. One woman was talking to another about not being able to get a particular thing and said, "Oh well, at least I'm still alive."
>
> When I got on the train to go home, I felt very strange, as though I was in another culture. I suppose I was.

Often the students' descritpion of the project includes a description of the sisters who are responsible for The Dwelling Place. Again and again, I have heard statements like this: "The sisters are loving friends for the women. The atmosphere they create in The Dwelling Place is one of congeniality, support, respect, and love. I think one of the most healing aspects of The Dwelling Place is that here the ladies are treated like people and accepted for who they are, regardless of how they look, smell, or what they do with the rest of their day."

FINAL REPORT

Project Results

Let me begin evaluating these internships by suggesting an imponderable and immeasurable result: the eggect upon the student body at large. The sales and raffles that internees had in order to buy books for the East Harlem G.E.D. center, the collection of jewelry and perfumes that students organized in the college for the ladies at The Dwelling Place: these events enabled everyone to participate, however vicariously, in a relief effort. Raising of consciousness to embrace world and neighborhood realities is, I think, one of the primary responsibilities of higher education.

The students involved in these internships were affected in many different ways. Indeed, any one student had to work out what was happening to her as a result of her internship experience, her internship connections. Thus, a nineteen year old student at The Dwelling Place:

> Most of the pregnant women who came to eat live in nearby welfare hotels and just can't afford to buy food. I could never seem to understand why these women would continue to have more children but now I understand. One of the women explained to me that once her children became of school age, the welfare authorities would require her to begin ro seek employment or enter into some type of job-training program. A lot of the women fear going back into the work force because they know they will have a difficult time earning enough money to support their family without welfare. A baby buys them time.

I wondered about - worried about - the elements of this disclosure. Where does empathy grow thin and cynicism prevail? How does one react to the stark realities of our overworked and impersonalized welfare system? It was important to help Tanya explore the more prevailing realities of the homeless and the almost homeless. I was particularly conscious of the ending of her brief study on The Dwelling Place:

> I will never look at a homeless person quite the

> same way again, now that I am beginning to understand their predicament. Now I also try to make those aroung me aware of the real homeless problem. This is not just a group of peole who don't want to work. These are people who have been dealt an untair hand in society and so, have given up on it.

For Lisa, another student at Marymount Manhattan College, this internship has confirmed her choice of a profession. In fact, Lisa has just been granted a scholarship that enables her to enter law school in her own city of Albany. She writes:

> As I become more familiar with the women, and they with me, I begin to learn more about them and their reasons for being homeless. This is most interesting for me because I hope some day - as a career - to change some of these reasons. Anne was kicked out of her apartment when her aunt, who had the lease in her name, died. Even though they had been living there together for years and years, they wouldn't let her keep the old lease, and they raised the rent to where she couldn't afford it and had to leave. She still commutes from the shelter to her job every day. This is not a stereotypical homeless woman. This is the kind of story that should be told to those who look down on the homeless because it could just as easily happen to them.

Another student saw intimations of her future in this internship. Meg's summation of her experience at The Dwelling Place reads as follows:

> This program has been an on-going growing experience. I feel fully integrated into the interactive group structure and a sense of solid levels of communication with some of the women. I am learning to feel comfortable with my role as an observer-participator in a support system and with the need to keep my perspective with regard to separation. I mean, my caring is genuine, but I am not responsible for effecting positive changes on the women's lives. Based on the consistence in the group composition, the number of regular members of the group, a strong sense of positive group development, a positive sense about my contributions and the developing interactive response from the women, I would like to continue to develop my skills and contribute to the process.

To which her psychology professor responded: "Go for it!" And Meg is now enrolled in an M.S.W. program.

If any project was learner-centered, it was our students' work in the G.E.D. program of East Harlem. The learners were both the volunteers and the G.E.D. students. Of the latter, Sister Dolorita, who supervises the program, has this to say:

> Our goal is to help these young women for the high school equivalency exam. We try to provide individual instruction, especially in the areas of reading and math, and to do this in an atmosphere that is friendly and non-threatening. We feel that the most important part of our task is to encourage students to believe in themselves, and we try to promote a spirit of mutual help among them.

Thinking about these young women, Stephanie who is a Marymount Manhattan senior says:

> The hardest lesson the program the program has taught us is that there is no "Graduation Day" when the whole class moves on to create new dreams. The G.E.D. program is a continuous, repetitive process. Students come and go. It is our duty to be there, mostly to listen, to repeat lessons, and to respond to their efforts. The G.E.D. program is constant patchwork until the entire educational and economic system can be changed to provide the basic knowledge and support that will allow us all to fulfill our dreams.

Evaluations - letters essentially of gratitude and praise - have come both from The Dwelling Place and the East Harlem G.E.D. center. Evaluations were given by the professors in participating disciplines as well as by me, director of the volunteers. Professors said, "What could I give but an "A" for such dedicated and intelligent service?" I was more reserved. I see these volunteers as the hope of the city, the promise of a better society. I have found it important to say to them, "Not yet enough." Success will be the explosion of "dreams too long deferred," an explosion the East Harlem students felt so deeply

when Stephanie and Diane presented them with this poem of Langston Hughs:

What happens to a dream deferred?

Does it dry up
like a raisin in the sun?
Or fester like a sore -
and then run?
Does it stink like rotten meat?
or crust and sugar over -
like a syrupy sweet?

Maybe it just sags
like a heavy load.

Or does it explode?

And I thank Jennifer who can write at the end of her Dwelling Place experience:

> We must teach them hopefulness, that is the only solution I have. These individual people have lost their hope one way or another and need desperately to find it. That is what my experience at The Dwelling Place has taught me.
>
> There is no one answer to the homeless problem because there is more than one person homeless. If New York had one million homeless, then there would be one million answers. BUT, there are no answers!
>
> The Dwelling Place has taught me to:
> -listen before I talk (because I don't know everything)
> -humble myself (because tragedy can strike anyone)
> -bite my tongue (because two wrongs don't make a right)
> -be thankful(for every tiny thing I have)
>
> AND
>
> -never to give up hope because no one and no situation is hopeless!

We intend to continue with these realizations, maybe even to capitalize on these insights. Even when a student cannot do an

internship, she can share her particular expertise. Drama students have been welcomed at the G.E.D. center...just to read one act plays. Political science majors have been welcomed to speak about polls and votes, even when all they could give was one morning in the semester. Students will continue to serve breakfast and dinner at The Dwelling Place and to bring to "the ladies" the seasonal joys of Valentine's Day or Christmas.

For those willing to commit themselves to the learning process of an internship, our faculty can still be counted on to make clear and to evaluate the academic aspects of the work. I know that, personally, one of my greatest joys has been directing volunteers who care about the problems that plabue our city and leave their victims helpless.

What we have gained thus far in the way of studies, term papers, and logs is all to the good. I have permission of the students to use them in any way that is helpful - as indeed I have used them in this report. We have printed hundreds of copies of the writing workshop in a booklet called Dreams. The G.E.D. center has also made dozens of copies for those who support the Family Health Service of which this high school equivalency program is a part.

But we run no risk of becoming proud of our accomplishments. One has only to ride the subways or walk the streets of our poor neighborhoods to know how little we have done.

Summary and Conclusions

"The poor will find it hard to forgive you for the bread you give - unless they feel your love." This was a comment made by a Frenchman to a group of women who were determined to face into the terrible poverty of the streets. Four hundred years later, his words hold.

The volunteers of Marymount Manhattan College have understood these words. One could work in the G.E.D. program of East Harlem or at The Dwelling Place of Times Square with all the social science skills, with all the tools of group dynamics, with the ability to read minds and foretell actions. All this might maintain order but it would not make a difference.

Social services will never be a substitute for justice and educational programs will never be a substitute for love. Our students need to know - now - what is happening to the Mayans in Guatemala, to the blacks in South Africa, to the Palestinians in Gaza. They need to know - now - what is happening in our South Bronx projects, in our overcrowded shelters and in our unmanageable classrooms. Internships are one way of removing the parentheses that separate the world of immediate realities from the world of academe.

What makes a good curriculum? Surely not class offerings that dry out the heart and feed on scholastic competition. What makes a good course load? Surely one where there is room for reaching out to those less fortunate. Ours - students, faculty and administration - is the task of improving post secondary education in significant ways. We do not need to feed more brains into the maw of corporate America. We need to send into our cities graduates who have eyes to see and hearts to care.

And so my advice to other practitioners who are interested in projects like ours is to hold it lightly, to trust your students, to hold them accountable not only for time but for love. Choose sites where supervisors work with that mix of acumen and love that can communicate itself to your students. And when your students come to believe they <u>can</u> make a difference, help them take the next step.